AICURD – Vision, Mission, and Key Development Initiatives (1985–Present).

AICURD, All India Centre for Urban and Rural Development, NGO India.

"AICURD, since 1985, empowers disadvantaged communities through **health, education, women empowerment, socio-economic surveys & rural development.**

From its incorporation in 1985, the **All India Centre for Urban and Rural Development (AICURD)** has been dedicated towards empowering marginalized communities in India. Based at 16, Bhai Veer Singh Marg, Gole Market, New Delhi, AICURD has made every effort towards infusing sustainable change in marginalized segments of society through a well-rounded approach. Its prime activities are in the areas of health, education, women's empowerment, socio-economic surveys, child welfare, skill development, SHGs (Self Help Groups), and rural and urban development projects.

Over the decades, **AICURD has grown into a credible NGO** partner for various Government of India ministries, welfare boards, and international agencies. The

organization's vision is rooted in creating an inclusive society where weaker sections of society—Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, women, children, migrant workers, and economically weaker sections—are brought to the mainstream and are given dignity, empowerment, and opportunities to grow.

Major Achievements of the Pilot Project:-

The following are the major achievements of the Pilot project in the area of waste management since its initiation in December' 2001:

Completed a Baseline Survey of Bhalaswa Resettlement colony and compilation of pre-project data.
Conducted community level programs, which included group meetings and awareness programs for children in the community.
Organized an exposure of selected community representatives and concerned functionaries in the Project at J.J. Resettlement Cluster in Sector 26 of Rohini, Delhi that was being operated by NGO "Samarth".
Conducted a techno-economic feasibility study for technical interventionin waste management suited to Bhalaswa Resettlement Colony.
Formed three Self Help Groups of women and conducted three training programs on thrift and credit.
Introduced an improved Waste Collection System in Bhalaswa Resettlement Colony by selecting 10 workers from the community and providing requisiteorientation to them and procuring and making available necessary equipment such aswheel barrows, litter bins, cycle carts etc. to them.
Completed a Baseline Survey of Bhalaswa Resettlement colony and compilation of pre-project data.
Introduced a recycling system for (a) waste paper to manufacture hand-made paper and(b) waste polythene bags for manufacturing poly-cotton blended yarn and fabrication of sheets which can be used for making mats,bags etc.
Setting up of a Recycling **Facility Centre at Basti Vikas Kendra of MCD located in Bhalaswa Resettlement Colony.**
Training of members of Self Help Groups in Recycling of Waste Paper and Polythene bags harnessing appliances and equipments installed at Basti Vikas Kendra, Bhalaswa, Delhi.
The work relating to collection, segregation and recycling of waste material continued during the year 2004-2005. Three 12|Page SHGs that came up in the year 2002-2003 continued to function satisfactorily. The recycling units could not take up on commercial lines due to lack of the requisite infrastructure, several of the problems experienced in the implementation of the progammes due to delay in release of funds allocated for the project.

Vision and Mission

To undertake innovative and experimental welfare projects in urban and rural areas with the focus on upliftment of disadvantaged sections such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, women and children, aged, handicapped, infirm, and mentally retarded.

Our Journey

All India Centre for Urban and Rural Development (AICURD), a non-governmental organisation, was founded by **D.P. Ray, the then Member of Parliament, in 1985**. After sustaining its existence for three years through non-funded projects, it began receiving

government-funded projects in 1988 and eventually grew into a national-level NGO **operational in 6 states:** Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Jammu & Kashmir, and Delhi.

1988–89: Hosted a National Seminar on prevention of atrocities on women (Dept. of Women and Child Development, HRD Ministry). Set up a Sewing-cum-Training Centre for **poor women and girls at Rampura, Delhi**. Donated hand-driven sewing machines to distressed women.

To review the functioning of delivery system for development and to suggest ways and means of making these more effective so as to reach the poor urban and rural dwellers.
To develop sustainable patterns of urban and rural development that empower disadvantaged groups, provide equitable opportunities, and favor social justice.
To fortify women's empowerment by means of education, training of skills, and promotion of SHGs.
To offer healthcare education on key areas like HIV/AIDS, TB (RNTCP DOT Centers), reproductive child health, and sanitation.
To ensure education for all, including non-formal education for children, vocational training, and rehabilitation programs for child labor.
To promote community involvement in government, poverty reduction, microfinance, and natural resource protection.
To facilitate handicraft artisans through training, raw material availability, market linkage, and design upgradation under government programs.

Major Development Initiatives
1. Grassroots Empowerment in Jalpaiguri, West Bengal

AICURD's most successful operational area is Jalpaiguri district (West Bengal). Since the early 2000s, AICURD has played a key role in SHG development, promotion of handicrafts, rehabilitation of child labor, and livelihood initiatives for women.

Self-Help Groups (SHGs):
AICURD has organized more than 520 SHGs in Jalpaiguri, of which 325 have been graded and credit-linked. They offer microfinance, livelihood interventions, and empowerment opportunities for rural women.

Handicraft Promotion:
Under Baba Sahib Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana (AHVY), AICURD provided training to over 240 artisans in crafts of jute, cane, bamboo, and weaving. It also set up a Craft Development Centre (CDC) in Jalpaiguri with the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India support. The centre still extends support to artisans by providing training, design innovation, and marketing linkages.

Child Labor Rehabilitation:
With the assistance of the NCLP (Labour Department, Govt. of West Bengal), AICURD set up a school for working children between 9–14 years, offering formal schooling, vocational training, and mid-day meal.

Creche Centres for Working Mothers:
In the Saddar block of Jalpaiguri, AICURD has set up ten creche centers for children between 0 and 6 years old, funded by the Central Social Welfare Board and West Bengal Social Welfare Board. Each center runs pre-primary education, nutrition, and health care, allowing women to work without risking the welfare of their children.

2. Health and Sanitation Programmes
AICURD has been engaged in public health awareness and intervention programmes, particularly in rural and slum clusters in urban areas, for a long time.
HIV/AIDS Awareness & TB Control: Ongoing health camps, counseling initiatives, and awareness programs assist in educating communities about HIV prevention and TB control (under the RNTCP DOT program).
Reproductive and Child Health: Emphasis on maternal care, safe delivery, immunization, and child nourishment.
Sanitation & Hygiene Projects: Conducted in Delhi NCR urban slums, these projects ensure safe sanitation, hygiene education, and waste management practices under the Yamuna Action Plan.
3. Women's Empowerment and Vocational Training

Women empowerment has been at the very center of AICURD's philosophy since its inception.

Skill Training: Training in cutting & tailoring, food processing, weaving, jute craft, and bamboo work has been imparted to thousands of women.

Entrepreneurship Development: With funding from NABARD, Nehru Yuva Kendra, and District Industries Centre (DIC) Jalpaiguri, AICURD has conducted entrepreneurship development programmes for SHG women and PMRY beneficiaries.

Microfinance and Income Generation: SHG women who were trained by AICURD have been able to take up agriculture, animal husbandry, small enterprises, and handicraft ventures with an impressive repayment rate of nearly 90%.

4. Government-Supported Projects

AICURD has been identified as a trusted NGO collaborator by various government bodies, including:

- Ministry of Textiles (CDC, AHVY Projects)
- Ministry of Food Processing Industries (FPTC Projects)
- NABARD (SHG Awareness Programs)
- Central and State Social Welfare Boards (Creche Centres)
- Nehru Yuva Kendra (Skill Development Programs)

These alliances have allowed AICURD to expand its reach in West Bengal, Delhi NCR, and the rest of India.

5. Extended Services & Community Development

In addition to its main focus areas, AICURD also operates programs in:
Legal Aid & Human Rights Awareness: Free legal camps in rural belts and Delhi.

Youth Development: Leadership workshops, vocational training, and entrepreneurship development.
Environmental Awareness: Initiatives for participatory waste management, sustainable livelihoods, and green practices.

Impact at a Glance

- 520+ SHGs organized, of which 325 were successfully credit-linked.
- Hundreds of artisans were trained in jute, bamboo, and weaving crafts.
- Child labour school opened at Jalpaiguri with vocational training.
- 10 Creche centres facilitating working mothers and BPL families.
- National health awareness initiatives in HIV/AIDS, TB, and sanitation.
- Government recognition as an NGO partner in social and skill development.

Since almost four decades, **AICURD has been a harbinger of change in urban and rural development.** From enabling rural women with SHGs and handicrafts in Jalpaiguri to encouraging sanitation in Delhi slums, the NGO has remained committed like a rock to inclusive growth and sustainable development.

With its established presence throughout India and headquarters in New Delhi, AICURD still strives for the upliftment of marginalized groups—changing lives, developing stronger communities, and establishing routes of empowerment.

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